CESS on R and D Work

3269. DR. JINENDRA KUMAR JAIN:

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that cess has been levied on the work pertaining to research and development in the country:

(b) if so, when this cess was levied and what is the procedure for assessment of cess;

(c) whether money has been collected every year through cess;

(d) if so, what is the amount collected through cess up to March, 1993; and

(e) whether money has been collected is utilised in research work; if so, what is the procedure for spending money on work pertaining to research and development?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS, PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS, OCEAN DEVELOPMENT AND ELECTRONICS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

Smuggling of CAT GENE Samples

3270. SHRI INDER KUMAR GUJRAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the write up in the Times of India of the 17th December, 1993 to the effect that the cat gene samples have been smuggled out of the country;

(b) whether Government are considering legislating to by ownership over the resources that originated in our country; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that it is proposed to take up with the GATT the concept of 'blobal common heritage' without giving just and fair compensation to countries of the South?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS, PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS, AND IN THE DEPTTS. OF ELECTRONICS AND OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government has seen the press clipping entitled "GENOME BANK FOR BREEDING TIGERS" appearing in the Times of India dated 17-12-1993, which does not mention smuggling out of cat gene samples from the country. However, the report appearing in the Times of India dated 18.12.1993 entitled "Scientist whisks big cat gene samples out of country" alleges that some of the samples have been taken out of the country.

(b) Action to formulate a legislation on conservation of biological diversity, including the issues related to ownership of the resources that originated in our country and access to genetic resources on mutually agreed terms on prior informed consent is under consideration.

(c) India, alongwith other countries, has ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity, which has come into force only two months ago. This Convention has, for the first time, established sovereign rights of the nations over their biological resuorces unlike the earlier situation when they were consider as the global common heritage.

Successful launch of GALS Satellite

3271. PROF. SAURIN BHATTACHARYA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether GALS Satellite was launched successfully on 20th January, 1994 and it is expected to be fully operational by March and from when its commercial programme would begin to be telecast over a wide area including Indian sub-continent;